



## ***AOT in Action***

### ***TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!***

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

#### **A Message from the Director:**

Good morning.

Mark your calendars for the 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Governor's Conference on Tourism, July 9-11, 2008! The conference will be held at the La Paloma Resort and Spa in Tucson.

AOT and our industry partners, the Arizona Tourism Alliance, the Arizona Hotel and Lodging Association and the Arizona Restaurant Association, are busy developing a wonderful program of interactive work sessions and expert speaker presentations. As the premier event for our industry, this conference offers a fantastic opportunity to network with more than 600 industry professionals. It also provides the most updated information about travel and tourism trends that can help you market your unique destination.

Registration information for the 2008 Governor's Conference on Tourism will be available in upcoming editions of *AOT in Action*.

We look forward to seeing you at this amazing event!

Have a great week.

Margie A. Emmermann  
Director  
Arizona Office of Tourism

## AOT News Flash

### AOT Announces Ad Opportunities for the 2009-2010 German and Spanish Language Travel Guides

The Arizona Office of Tourism is producing two international language tourist guides, *The Arizona Reiseplaner* (German) and *Visita Arizona* (Spanish). The 2009-2010 International Travel Guides will be distributed by AOT for the next two years to potential tourists, travel agents, and tour operators in Europe and Mexico. These guides are AOT's main fulfillment piece for the German and Mexican markets, with a circulation of 75,000 and 35,000 respectively. The guides will be four-color, 36-page magazines with no more than 25 percent advertising. The guides will be individualized to appeal to the interests specific to each market, with content geared around what to do and see in Arizona, with a significant portion of each guide being written by native speakers who have experienced Arizona first hand. Both guides will include maps and the five regions of Arizona, Native American information, and international visitor resources. For additional information and to obtain a media kit, contact Kathleen Lockhart of Hennen Publishing and Marketing Group at [kathleen@hennenpmg.com](mailto:kathleen@hennenpmg.com) or at 480-664-0541.

### AOT Represented at Annual Border Trade Alliance Conference

AOT's Executive Projects Manager Laura French, attended the Border Trade Alliance's annual conference titled "Understanding Wait Times: Border Delays' Impact on Trade." The two-day event included panels on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) and Washington State's new Enhanced Driver's License. Speakers included Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez, Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison, Sen. John Cornyn, and the General Services Administration Administrator Lurita Doan. AOT serves on the BTA's Travel and Immigration Forum and these meetings allow us to advocate for the tourism industry and Arizona.

### AOT's Research Section has been Updated

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

- State Park Visitation February 2008
- National Park Visitation January 2008
- National Park Visitation February 2008
- Lodging Performance February 2008
- Lodging Performance February 2008 (By County)
- Gross Sales and Taxes January 2008

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Billings, Research Specialist, at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at [bbillings@azot.gov](mailto:bbillings@azot.gov).

## Trippin' with AOT

### Arizona Well Represented at ITB Berlin 2008

Hylton Fothergill, Travel Industry Marketing Manager and Erica Rich, Media Relations Manager, attended Internationale Tourismus Boerse (ITB) held March 5 – 9, 2008 in Berlin, Germany. ITB is the largest travel tradeshow in the world, attracting more than 10,000 exhibitors from 181

countries. In attendance were also more than 100,000 travel industry professionals and 68,000 consumer visitors. AOT staff was joined by representatives from the Scottsdale, Phoenix and Flagstaff Convention and Visitors Bureaus, along with Monument Valley Tours and the Quality Inn & Suites at the Grand Canyon. There were 24 pre-scheduled appointments where information was gathered, compiled and shared by all delegates resulting in 12 leads, 26 marketing opportunities and 15 requests for promotional materials. Additionally, the delegation met with more than 30 journalists. To obtain a copy of the report, please contact Kristy Swanson at 602-364-3696 or [kswanson@azot.gov](mailto:kswanson@azot.gov).

## Industry News

### **SAVE the DATE: 25<sup>th</sup> Annual National Tourism Week May 10-18, 2008**

"Discover Great American Traditions!" Join hundreds of cities, states and businesses nationwide in the annual salute to travel and tourism in America, presented by the Travel Industry Association (TIA). National Tourism Week is a collective effort to promote the power of travel through customized events in communities nationwide. The goal is to enhance the country's economy, security and perception, and recognize the cultural and social benefits created by travel and tourism. For more information, please visit [www.tia.org](http://www.tia.org).

### **Travel Leaders Push Campaign to Attract Overseas Visitors**

With the American economy sliding toward recession, hospitality industry leaders want lawmakers to launch an initiative they say would deliver more tourists to the U.S. If approved, the program would use fees from foreign visitors to create a \$200 million national marketing campaign, the first of its kind for America but a long-used tactic by other countries to attract tourists. The idea is to develop a unified marketing pitch to attract tourists to the U.S. and undo years of bad press in foreign markets that emphasizes hassles, delays and rudeness international guests face. "We should be blowing the doors off," said Roger Dow, president and CEO of the Travel Industry Association. "Every developed country in the world spends money promoting travel and tourism. We spend zero."

About 171 members of the House and 39 senators have already endorsed the Travel Promotion Act. Under the legislation, the government would tack \$10 onto the \$25 fee foreign visitors with visa waiver privileges pay to enter the U.S. The fee would raise about \$100 million annually. The travel industry would contribute another \$100 million. The bill would also create a committee of 16 people, 14 from the private sector and two from government, to oversee the money and devise strategies to market America to foreigners. ([www.LasVegasReview-Journal.com/Business](http://www.LasVegasReview-Journal.com/Business))

### **Your Customers Want More from Your Web Site**

Many business leaders, disappointed by online sales growth, see Web consumers as disloyal and unwilling to spend. But that's because the managers are not exploiting what customers value most: engagement. Online automobile shoppers want information about cars, yes, but they also want to learn about such other topics as travel, sports, apparel, and finance, our research shows. Online shoppers for upscale clothing might typically want information on art or even business. Most firms limit their sites to providing narrow information about the products or services that are for sale. Indeed, the majority of managers we spoke to in our global study told us they believe that a broad array of information diverts attention from the core offerings. But we found it helps customers search for solutions, invites them to think of all the ways the core products might add value to their lives, wins their loyalty, and entices them to buy. In fact, we found that exploiting consumers' desire for engagement is the single dominant driver of superior shareholder value for e-commerce companies. Research by the Harvard Business Review involved an analysis of more

than 1,700 e-commerce sites, along with interviews of 238 consumers and 112 managers in the United States, Europe, and Asia over four years. Some 57 percent of the managers were disappointed by their firms' online sales growth, but only 17 percent had a plan to change their sites to improve sales—an indication that they didn't even know how to start turning things around. Most believed that price was the only important way to attract online customers.

### **Survey: Wealthy Consumer Use of Online Social Networks Increase 33%**

Wealthy consumer participation in online social networks dramatically increased to 60 percent in 2008, from 27 percent in 2007, according to The Luxury Institute's latest Wealth Survey "The Wealthy and Web 2.0." Participation levels in leading social networks are: 16 percent for MySpace, 13 percent for LinkedIn, and 11 percent for Facebook. The wealthy average membership in 2.8 social networks, with an average of 110 connections. "Being connected is second nature to these over-achievers," said Milton Pedraza, CEO of the Luxury Institute. "We are pleasantly surprised at the rapid acceleration in the over 55-year-old wealthy consumers whose participation increased five-fold, to 49 percent. The implications for luxury goods and services firms are profound. While some in the luxury industry are still debating e-commerce, search and banner ads, the majority of their customers have leaped into the online dialogue. Luxury needs to catch up quickly." Results indicate that online communities will continue to fragment into increasingly selective and specialized entities of like-minded members. This should make it easier to reach target markets, but luxury firms should avoid critical mistakes. "The wealthy have a great deal to lose," said Pedraza. "They will not tolerate behaviors exhibited recently by social networks that force opt-out techniques on member's private purchase information, and make it difficult to exit." Sixty-five percent of wealthy consumers say that giving out personal data without permission will cause them to disconnect; 63 percent have an interest in "do not track" lists. The dramatic rise in wealthy participation in online communities points to another great opportunity for luxury marketers, who can create their own online customer and prospect communities and engage people in a rich honest dialogue. "Luxury providers should already be in the testing and experimentation stages of online prospects, customers, employees and other constituents. The era of transparency and co-creation in luxury is well under way," added Pedraza.